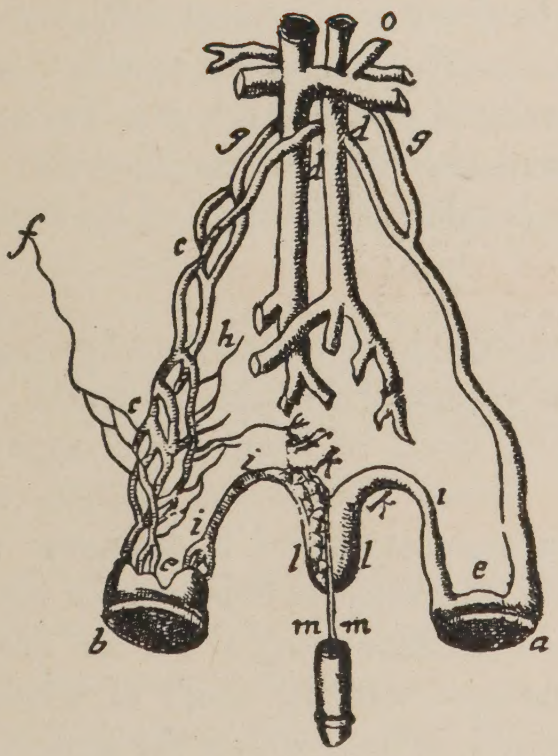
IMPOTENCE



THROUGH THE AGES

IMPOTENCE

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IN ALL THE ANNALS of healing, no faculty has commanded more earnest consideration than sexual potency in the male. Diverse techniques have been used for ensuring it to the newborn or pubescent child, or for restoring it to the adult. Throughout the world, at every level of human cultural development, man has applied to this urgent need whatever formulas, hypotheses and devices were the peculiar achievement of his civilization.

SUPERNATURAL THERAPY

Human thought has often attributed certain phenomena to the workings of invisible, immortal, personalized beings who could be angered and appeased, or won over by rituals. The Basivis of India serve, among others, a goddess named Huligamma[1] under whose protection are deformed men and the impotent.

Mexican Indians living about the Rio Grande felt that impotence was the result of witchcraft, which might be undone by anointing the genitalia with sacred oil. A little of the oil is then dropped, with appropriate words, into a pan of live coals, and the patient may then go to his beloved to find his powers restored.[2]

SEEDS AND FERTILITY

Among primitive peoples the analogy between human and vegetable propagation has been very generally ob-

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served. Our word *semen* literally means *seed*. An interesting Aztec ritual, still practiced in Mexico under the name of Teoqualo, combines the seed concept with that of a deity. The Aztecs, it seems, had a special god of fertility whose effigy was formed of seeds kneaded into a dough with the blood of children. At the festival of the winter solstice, this effigy was killed and eaten by men and boys in order to increase the *sexual force*.[3]

Not only can seeds enhance the fertility of man; among the Banyakoles of Uganda, as well as the Pangwe natives of West Africa,[4] sexual intercourse is known to stimulate markedly the growth of food plants in the immediate vicinity. Twins, and the parents of twins, being excellent examples of fecundity, are particularly helpful in making the rice grow apace. In fact, in Borneo,[5, 6] planting of the rice was a signal for sexual ceremonies that began with songs of entreaty to the rice, to follow the human example of propagation.

ENSURING POTENCY

The folklore of various modern nations provides techniques for ensuring that a boy will attain a competent manhood and have many offspring.

In Brittany, for instance, according to Percher, writing in the *Bull. et. mém. de la soc. d'anthropol.*, a male child before being christened is passed through a large hole in a rock, and thus acquires excellent *vertues reproductives*.[7] The early German tribes preferred to wear a purple stone on the left forearm, or, in more refractory cases, to wear a certain part of the dried mane of a certain kind of horse in order to maintain potency.[8]

In Slavonia,[9] a boy nearing puberty must prepare himself by urinating over mushrooms in the forest, striking his penis against an oak tree, and then speaking the following tuneful rhyme:

Jako tvrd moj kurac, kao što je ovaj rastić.

CAUSES OF IMPOTENCE

Besides witches, another powerful cause of impotence is the special evil inherent in menstruating women, known to all races and feared throughout the world. Indeed, contact with a woman during menstruation would render a Suk warrior impotent: "In the rain they will shiver, and in the heat they will faint."[10]

Our own people have surprisingly exact ideas of the causes of impotence. Masturbation is presumed to be an excellent cause, although in China it has been considered a beneficial exercise for developing youths. Likewise, sexual overindulgence is frequently cited as a cause, although habitués of the old Vienna stoutly maintain that potency can be sustained almost indefinitely if the correspondent is frequently changed.

SHUNAMMITISM

To cheer the aging King David, his loyal supporters searched for a maiden of surpassing allure, and finally found the virgin Abishag of the Shunammites. She was brought before the king and did all in her power to delight his heart . . . she cherished him, lay in his bosom that he might have warmth, etc.—but to no avail.[11]

This method reappeared in Paris during the sixteenth century. There, for a nominal fee, as reported by Hagen, an elderly man could be put to bed with two virgins,

one on each side, with their skin just touching his, in order to maintain or restore his potency.[12] It was important for the girls to remain virgin if the treatment was to succeed; but even so, they were kept on duty for only a week, and then received a protracted vacation before returning to their chore.

The complete rite may be of value, but according to the Parisians, the mere odor of young women would abolish the more disturbing symptoms of old age.[12]

French ladies of the Renaissance had such delicate sensibilities that they permitted themselves to be nauseated at a man who was merely rumored to be impotent. Mme. de Mantuison is said to have had an especially developed faculty for diagnosing impotence by odor.

DIETARY THERAPY

The list of foods presumed to have aphrodisiac properties is of surprising length. Mushrooms, mistletoe, rue, ivy, mandrake, hemp, nettles, onions, garlic, leeks, celery, caviar, sea-holly, hard-boiled eggs—and more recently oysters in season—all have been eaten to enhance or restore potency.

The stimulating powers of mistletoe were advocated to peoples as widely diverse as the Siberians and the Hvalpai Indians of Arizona.[9]

Foods with strong flavors, spices and potent seasonings are held to operate favorably. Foods which suggest the male genitalia are especially valuable, celery being esteemed among the Belgians,[13] and ginseng among the Chinese. Unusual or rare foods may readily be assigned an aphrodisiac effect; caviar, for example.[13]

History shows that onions were eaten by impotent men in Egypt[9] after their effectiveness had been established largely on an astronomical basis: their structure compared with prevalent ideas of the firmament, so that they were clearly sacred and beneficial. They had also the recommendation of Aristophanes, who carried on extensive clinical investigation among the Greeks.[13]

Before a vegetable becomes entirely familiar, it may enjoy astonishing properties. When first introduced into Europe, the potato (*Solanum tuberosum*)[13] was credited, in the sixteenth century, with a marked aphrodisiac effect.

Likewise, the tomato (*Lycopersicum esculentum*) passed three centuries in Europe under the guise of a deadly poison, and was never eaten until 1830. During its experimental period, so great were the powers exhibited by sublethal doses (taken with due caution) that it was known as a *love-apple*.[14]

SCATOLOGICAL REMEDIES

Utilizing the most abundant biologicals at hand, primitive races have made extensive use of the excreta of animals and of man.

It is believed to this day, in Serbia, that nothing compares with a few dashes of pregnant mare's urine in a glass of water as a treatment for impotence.[9] Routes of administration vary. Paullini,[15] writing in 1698, reported a large group of cases in which impotence was corrected by the feces of sparrows or prairie hens, taken by mouth, or of rabbits, bulls, cows, or goats, applied by inunction. In refractory cases, according to Bourke's

"Scatological Rites of All Nations," the feces of leopards may prove of benefit although a trifle hard to procure.[9]

PARTS OF ANIMALS

Now, if it can be recognized that a certain part of the animal body furnishes desirable characteristics to its owner, it has always been considered a simple matter to acquire those characteristics for one's self.

In South Africa the testes of a slain enemy who showed exceptional prowess are formed into an ointment for use at circumcisions in order to confer *strength*.[16] But among the Basutos,[17] fecundity is obtained by inoculating men with the ashes of the tuft of hair found about the *horns* of a bull.

The Hindus began with a schedule of religious duties, and then applied an ointment made of the dried, pulverized penis of a bear and fat from the kidney region of a tiger. The ointment was to be applied immediately before attempting intercourse, for prompt action.[9]

In the Middle Ages, according to Etmueller, a moderate dose of teeth was recommended, but the important consideration was to extract the teeth of a man who has died a violent death.[9] They are then taken by mouth in some palatable form.

EVADING THE ISSUE

Among the ancient Greeks, impotence was a calamity of profound public significance. For this reason the Greek wife was entitled to call upon any other citizen for aid, in order to produce a male succession by the usual methods.[18,19] The Brahmins had a similar policy which they termed *Levirate*, or *Niyoga*,[19] allowing the

widow's brother to generate the child on condition that he do it only with religious fervor. In Arabia, also this system of proxy was approved.[20]

MISCELLANEOUS PREPARATIONS

Witches, symbols, plants, dejecta, anatomical remedies and proxies are barely a sketch of the many approaches to the treatment of impotence. In addition there are materials gathered from such diverse origins as to constitute a special branch of pharmacy. We may mention, among these, rare and potent perfumes: Hippocrates suggested that myrrh be instilled into the vagina before intercourse in order to stimulate *both* partners.[21] Ovid, in his *Ars Amatoria* has written favorably of wine.[22] Opium has been employed in France[23] (at least in women) and in India, and the Hindus were impressed by their results with cannabis as well.[23] Cannabis, known to the Mexicans as *mariguan*, found many important uses including the restoration of potency.[2] Stramonium was held in religious esteem by the Arizona Indians, and it was used at one time to improve potency, at another time to suppress libido.[9] And Spanish fly (cantharides), seems to have found application in Europe at least since Shakespeare's time.[24]

SEMEN

It must not be thought that the nature and purpose of semen is everywhere known, for there are African tribes who are unable to form an association between sexual intercourse and pregnancy. Paracelsus, however, used semen in forming a *homunculus*, or laboratory-produced human creature—a favorite alchemist's pastime.[9]

There is still a Hungarian superstition, to the effect that an impotent man need but wet a small rug with his own semen, and throw it into an open grave; with the semen goes his trouble, and they are carefully buried together to avoid a recurrence.[9]

GLAND THERAPY

Finally we see the tribes resorting to testicular materials to an increasing extent. It is astonishing to note how early in human culture the androgenic functions of the testis were at least implicitly understood.

Legend tells of the good King Iphiclus who wanted a son but was unable to take the necessary steps. He repaired to Melampus, seer and physician, to learn the reason. Melampus, with the aid of a vulture, traced the trouble back to Iphiclus's childhood, when the boy was in close proximity to a knife which his father was using to geld rams. The treatment advised by the vulture was to find the knife, make a decoction of the rust in its blade, and drink the preparation over a period of ten days.[25] Iphiclus made a quick recovery.

Martin Schurig, physician and scholar of Dresden, has compiled a thick but thoughtful Latin treatise on *Spermatologia* (1720), in which he recognizes the value of testes in the treatment of impotence[26] according to the prescription:

Rx. Semin. ernc.
Fol. Saturoj
Testic. apror. vulp. aa3j
Cinamon. acut. aa3j

Note: Great emphasis is placed upon the method of preparation to assure pharmaceutical elegance.

The whole matter was simplified among Central African natives who ate the testicles of goats.[3, 27]

History demands that we mention here the great testicle-pill, a preparation which differs from the foregoing in that it has an enteric coating, but in no other particular. It is generally recognized that oral so-called "testicle-pills" are of negligible therapeutic value, since it would take about *half a ton* of bull testes to furnish the hormone activity in one ampule or in three tablets of modern synthesized male sex hormone. It was not until the year 1941 A.D. that an *orally effective* mode of male sex hormone therapy came into medical practice.

IMPOTENCE

In the modern view, several factors enter into the production of impotence, and these factors are related as links in a chain. When each link is intact, potency is present. Failing any link, there may be hypogonadal, neurological, urological, or psychic impotence, or impotence due to androgenic deficiency. Of course, hypogonadism itself is another expression of androgenic deficiency, particularly one occurring during the developmental epoch of puberty.

The forms of impotence which are amenable to male hormone therapy are, naturally, only those due to male hormone deficiency: i.e., to failing or deficient gonadal function. There is no reason to hope for salutory results where impotence is due to other causes, except that the male hormone often has been found to exert a general effect described as "tonic" or "producing a sense of well-being," in certain depressed male patients.

THE MALE SEX HORMONE

The male sex hormone, testosterone, was discovered in 1935.[28] In the same year it was produced technically in the laboratory.[29] Since that time, intensive laboratory and clinical investigation have established an enormous body of knowledge regarding the uses and properties of the male sex hormone, and, in 1941, there was made available, after a period of three years' clinical study,[30,31,32] a new *orally* effective derivative.

ORETON, ORETON-F, AND ORETON-M

Schering's male hormone preparations are ORETON* *Ampules*, ORETON-F *Ointment* (in tubes and single-dose *Toplicators*), and ORETON-M *Tablets*.

ORETON furnishes the largest doses, acting over the longest period of time, and is of use when high concentrations are required as in the initial treatment of *hypogonadism*,[33,34,35,36] the *male climacteric*,[37] urinary obstruction due to *benign prostatic hypertrophy*,[38,39,40] and the gynecological indications such as *dysfunctional uterine bleeding*,[41,42] *after-pains*,[43] *breast engorgement*,[44] and for the *suppression of lactation*.[45,46]

ORETON-F* Ointment and ORETON-M* Tablets, the new *orally effective* male hormone preparation, may be employed instead of injection therapy, when lower concentration is required or as maintenance therapy after treatment has been well started, in hypogonadism,[30,31,32] in *impotence of androgenic deficiency*,[33,34,35] the *male climacteric*[30] and in certain gynecological indications.[44]

Schering's ORETON preparations are science's solution to man's age-long search for the male sex hormone.

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The cover illustration was executed by Nicolai Venette, in 1730, for his *"Treatise on The Generation of Mankind."* It depicts the male generative tract as then understood.